

From: Scott Shriver
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/28/02 2:33pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom It May Concern:

I hope it's not too late to voice my objection to any plan requiring Microsoft to provide computers to schools as part of a settlement in the DOJ's antitrust suit against the corporation.

As the computer lab supervisor in an Ohio middle school, I never thought I'd see the day when I'd turn down the possibility of free computer equipment or software. We sure could use whatever assistance may be provided in our goal of increasing student access to computers and the Internet. The substantial costs of modern technology makes it difficult to provide quality technology instruction in any but the most affluent schools. I know the objective is to penalize Microsoft in a way that helps our nation succeed in reforming and invigorating our public school system, but as well-meaning and obvious as this solution may seem, to give such a "gift" of computers will create several potential difficulties.

I have used "Wintel" computers for many years and have only recently replaced worn-out machines with comparable Apple iMac computers. I have used identical software on both machines and find that the Macintosh is far easier to instruct with and keep running. Maintenance and troubleshooting time has been slashed. Networking, even between Macintosh and Windows machines has never been easier. Our school is now reaching the conclusion of a long process of migrating to the Mac platform.

Apple has worked hard, I am sure to maintain a niche in the education market and has rebounded from recent economic problems. They would have difficulty competing with a company that is literally giving away their products to schools. The proposed settlement will cost Microsoft some money, to be sure. But the gains made by the company as it seeks to make inroads into the education sector will, I believe, more than make up for the heartburn of giving away product. In fact, I would liken this settlement solution to Brer Rabbit's briar patch: they may complain about the cost, but they would relish the opportunity to get away with a forced increase in marketshare. It is my opinion that to provide any settlement to Microsoft which would erode Apple's ability to continue to provide great service and equipment to the education market does a disservice to the corporation as well as to schools.

Couldn't Microsoft be asked to provide either free technology OR a comparable amount of money that might be used to purchase technology of choice for the schools?

Thank you for your time and attention.

Very sincerely,

R. Scott Shriver

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